

What is the Victim's Role?

As a victim of domestic violence your safety is paramount in the Domestic Violence Court. Your concerns and information are vital considerations in every step of the court process. Your active participation is a necessary component in the success of the Domestic Violence Court.

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

A Victim Impact Statement is your opportunity to tell the court how you and your family have been affected by the abuse. Your voice is a valuable tool. DVC Case Workers are available for assistance during this process.

ATTENDING COURT

If the case goes to trial, the victim will be subpoenaed to attend court and be expected to give evidence (tell their story of events) on behalf of the Crown. This can be a frightening and confusing time and DVC Case Workers are available for support.

Private waiting rooms are available in the courthouse to help ensure the privacy, comfort and safety of victims and witnesses.

Phone Numbers

Victim Support

DVC Case Workers	975-8212
	975-8476
	975-8895
SPS Victim Services	975-8400

Legal Services

Crown Prosecutors	933-5149
Provincial Court Clerk	933-7052
Legal Aid (city)	933-7820
Legal Aid (rural)	933-7855
Court Workers	933-7038

Emergency Services

Saskatoon Police	975-8300
Rural RCMP	975-5173
FSS Intimate Partner Violence Outreach	244-0127
Mobile Crisis	933-6200

Emergency Shelters

Interval House	244-0185
Adelle House	668-2761
YWCA Shelter	244-2844
Infinity House	955-2332
Salvation Army	244-6280

Saskatoon Domestic Violence Court

Building Healthy Relationships

Information for the Victims of Domestic Violence

Provincial Court Building
220-19th Street East
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Court Room #6

Saskatoon Domestic Violence Court

The Domestic Violence court is a therapeutic court that was established in 2005 in Saskatoon to address charges related to domestic violence offences. The DVC Treatment Option allows those who are willing to take responsibility for their actions by pleading guilty to complete a counseling program for domestic violence and address any substance abuse problems they may have. Completion of such a program will be taken into consideration by the court at the time of sentencing. The Domestic Violence Court is held every Tuesday at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. in court room #6 at the Provincial Court Building in Saskatoon.

CHARGES

In Courts in Canada, **charges are laid by the police not the complainant. Only the Crown has the authority to withdraw criminal charges.** In relation to domestic violence charges, it is the standard policy of the Ministry of Justice not to withdraw the charges even if the complainant (victim) wishes to do so.

CONDITIONS

Conditions, such as 'no direct or indirect contact' with the victim, are typically put in place by police at the time an accused is charged to assure safety and security for the victim and the family. These conditions remain in place until the Court orders a change. When a request for changes or removal of these conditions is made the DVC Case Workers must complete an assessment which includes a risk assessment addressing the safety

of the victim and any children involved. Once the assessment has been made recommendations are provided to the Crown Prosecutor. **All requests for changes to conditions must be presented to the court and the Judge makes the final decision.**

The Benefits of the Domestic Violence Court

The Domestic Violence Court was established to allow for the opportunity to rebuild relationships and foster healing for individuals and families experiencing domestic violence. Some benefits of the DVC are:

- The DVC is focused on building relationships and allowing for the growth of healthy families, not putting offenders in jail.
- Getting early treatment is a positive step towards ending the cycle of violence.
- Allowing offenders to complete programming before sentence so the Judge can take this into account when passing sentencing.

DVC TREATMENT PROGRAMS

When an accused takes responsibility for their actions he/she has the option of participating in DVC treatment programming. Successful completion of programming by an accused is something the Judge takes into consideration as a positive factor when sentencing. Treatment programs can be up to 32 weeks in length and are supervised by Probation Services and run by:

- Probation Services;
- Mental Health Services;
- Family Service Saskatoon; and
- Joint initiatives between First Nations Communities and Mental Health Services.

Domestic Violence Court Case Workers

Victims of domestic violence may feel confused, angry or neglected by the justice system. Domestic Violence Court Case Workers are here to provide you and your family with information and support. DVC Case Workers contact all victims in all domestic violence cases either by phone or mail.

WHAT SERVICES ARE OFFERED?

- Information about the status of the case.
- Liaison and advocacy with the court and Crown Prosecutor to help ensure your needs in the courtroom are known.
- Referrals to community and government agencies.
- Court preparation and accompaniment.
- Assistance with your victim impact statement and information regarding victim compensation.
- Recommendations to the court regarding changes or removal of conditions.